

The Honorable David W. Christel

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
WESTERN DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON
AT SEATTLE

**TRANSAMERICA LIFE INSURANCE
COMPANY,**

Plaintiff,

V.

ANGELINA D. SLEE, THOMAS M. SLEE, and
ANTHONY SLEE, as power of attorney for
ANGELINA D. SLEE,

Defendants.

NO. C19-1536JLR-DWC

**AGREEMENT REGARDING
DISCOVERY OF
ELECTRONICALLY STORED
INFORMATION AND ORDER**

The parties hereby stipulate to the following provisions regarding the discovery of electronically stored information (“ESI”) in this matter:

A. General Principles

1. An attorney's zealous representation of a client is not compromised by conducting discovery in a cooperative manner. The failure of counsel or the parties to litigation to cooperate in facilitating and reasonably limiting discovery requests and responses raises litigation costs and contributes to the risk of sanctions.

2. The proportionality standard set forth in Fed. R. Civ. P. 26(b)(1) must be applied in each case when formulating a discovery plan. To further the application of the

1 proportionality standard in discovery, requests for production of ESI and related responses
2 should be reasonably targeted, clear, and as specific as possible.

3 **B. ESI Disclosures**

4 Within 30 days after a ruling on the Defendants' motion to dismiss, each party shall
5 disclose:

6 1. Custodians. The five custodians most likely to have discoverable ESI in their
7 possession, custody or control. The custodians shall be identified by name, title, connection to
8 the instant litigation, and the type of the information under his/her control.

9 2. Non-custodial Data Sources. A list of non-custodial data sources (e.g.
10 shared drives, servers, etc.), if any, likely to contain discoverable ESI.

11 3. Third-Party Data Sources. A list of third-party data sources, if any, likely
12 to contain discoverable ESI (e.g. third-party email and/or mobile device providers, "cloud"
13 storage, etc.) and, for each such source, the extent to which a party is (or is not) able to preserve
14 information stored in the third-party data source.

15 4. Inaccessible Data. A list of data sources, if any, likely to contain
16 discoverable ESI (by type, date, custodian, electronic system or other criteria sufficient to
17 specifically identify the data source) that a party asserts is not reasonably accessible under
18 Fed. R. Civ. P. 26(b)(2)(B). [*Section (C)(3)(a)(i) below sets forth data sources and ESI*
19 *which are not required to be preserved by the parties. Those data sources and ESI do not need*
20 *to be included on this list.*]

21 **C. Preservation of ESI**

22 The parties acknowledge that they have a common law obligation to take reasonable
23 and proportional steps to preserve discoverable information in the party's possession, custody

1 or control. With respect to preservation of ESI, the parties agree as follows:

2 1. Absent a showing of good cause by the requesting party, the parties shall not
3 be required to modify the procedures used by them in the ordinary course of business to back-
4 up and archive data; provided, however, that the parties shall preserve all discoverable ESI in
5 their possession, custody or control.

6 2. All parties shall supplement their disclosures in accordance with Rule 26(e)
7 with discoverable ESI responsive to a particular discovery request or mandatory disclosure
8 where that data is created after a disclosure or response is made (unless excluded under (C)(3)
9 or (D)(1)-(2) below).

10 3. Absent a showing of good cause by the requesting party, the following
11 categories of ESI need not be preserved:

- 12 a. Deleted, slack, fragmented, or other data only accessible by forensics.
- 13 b. Random access memory (RAM), temporary files, or other ephemeral data
14 that are difficult to preserve without disabling the operating system.
- 15 c. On-line access data such as temporary internet files, history, cache, cookies,
16 and the like.
- 17 d. Data in metadata fields that are frequently updated automatically, such as last-
18 opened dates (see also Section (E)(5)).
- 19 e. Back-up data that are substantially duplicative of data that are more
20 accessible elsewhere.
- 21 f. Server, system or network logs.
- 22 g. Data remaining from systems no longer in use that is unintelligible on the
23 systems in use.
- 24 h. Electronic data (e.g. email, calendars, contact data, and notes) sent to or from
25 mobile devices (e.g., iPhone, iPad, Android, and Blackberry devices), provided
26 that a copy of all such electronic data is routinely saved elsewhere (such as on
27 a server, laptop, desktop computer, or “cloud” storage).

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1 **D. Privilege**

2 1. With respect to privileged or work-product information generated after the
3 filing of the complaint, parties are not required to include any such information in privilege
4 logs.

5 2. Activities undertaken in compliance with the duty to preserve information are
6 protected from disclosure and discovery under Fed. R. Civ. P. 26(b)(3)(A) and (B).

7 3. Information produced in discovery that is protected as privileged or work
8 product shall be immediately returned to the producing party, and its production shall not
9 constitute a waiver of such protection, if: (i) such information appears on its face to have been
10 inadvertently produced or (ii) the producing party provides notice within 15 days of discovery
11 by the producing party of the inadvertent production.

12 4. Privilege Log Based on Metadata. The parties agree that privilege logs shall
13 include a unique identification number for each document and the basis for the claim (attorney-
14 client privileged or work-product protection). For ESI, the privilege log may be generated
15 using available metadata, including author/recipient or to/from/cc/bcc names; the subject matter
16 or title and date created. Should the available metadata provide insufficient information for
17 the purpose of evaluating the privilege claim asserted, the producing party shall include such
18 additional information as required by the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure.

19 **E. ESI Discovery Procedures**

20 1. On-site inspection of electronic media. Such an inspection shall not be permitted
21 absent a demonstration by the requesting party of specific need and good cause or by
22 agreement of the parties.

23 2. Search methodology. If the use of search terms becomes necessary, the parties

1 shall timely attempt to reach agreement on appropriate search terms, or an appropriate computer
2 or technology-aided methodology, before any such effort is undertaken. The parties shall
3 continue to cooperate in revising the appropriateness of the search terms or computer- or
4 technology-aided methodology.

5 If search terms are used, in the absence of agreement on appropriate search terms, or an
6 appropriate computer- or technology-aided methodology, the following procedures shall apply:

7 a. A producing party shall disclose the search terms or queries, if any, and
8 methodology that it proposes to use to locate ESI likely to contain discoverable information.
9 The parties shall meet and confer to attempt to reach an agreement on the producing party's
10 search terms and/or other methodology.

11 b. If search terms or queries are used to locate ESI likely to contain
12 discoverable information, a requesting party is entitled to no more than 5 additional terms or
13 queries to be used in connection with further electronic searches absent a showing of good
14 cause or agreement of the parties. The 5 additional terms or queries, if any, must be provided
15 by the requesting party within 14 days of receipt of the producing party's production.

16 c. Focused terms and queries should be employed; broad terms or queries,
17 such as product and company names, generally should be avoided. Absent a showing of
18 good cause, each search term or query returning more than 250 megabytes of data is presumed
19 to be overbroad, excluding Microsoft PowerPoint files, image and audio files, and similarly
20 large file types.

21 d. The producing party shall search both non-custodial data sources and
22 ESI maintained by the custodians identified above.

23 3. Format. The parties agree that ESI will be produced to the requesting party with

1 searchable text, in a format to be decided between the parties. Acceptable formats include, but
2 are not limited to, native files, multi-page TIFFs (with a companion OCR or extracted text
3 file), single-page TIFFs (only with load files for e-discovery software that includes metadata
4 fields identifying natural document breaks and also includes companion OCR and/or extracted
5 text files),and searchable PDF. Unless otherwise agreed to by the parties, files that are not easily
6 converted to image format, such as spreadsheet, database and drawing files, should be
7 produced in native format.

8 4. De-duplication. The parties may de-duplicate their ESI production across
9 custodial and non-custodial data sources after disclosure to the requesting party.

10 5. Metadata fields. If the requesting party seeks metadata, the parties agree that
11 only the following metadata fields need be produced: document type; custodian and duplicate
12 custodians; author/from; recipient/to, cc and bcc; title/subject; file name and size; original file
13 path; date and time created, sent, modified and/or received; and hash value.

14 DATED: December 24, 2019

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ORDER

Based on the foregoing, IT IS SO ORDERED.

Dated this 6th day of January, 2020

David W. Christel
David W. Christel
United States Magistrate Judge

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STORED INFORMATION & ORDER - 8**
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